

83 DAFOE ROAD

JOHN A. RUSSELL BUILDING (ARCHITECTURE) – UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

City of Winnipeg
Historical Buildings Committee
Researcher: M. Peterson
January 2018

This building embodies the following heritage values as described in the *Historical Resources By-law*, 55/2014 (consolidated update July 13, 2016):

(a) It is one of early modern structures completed on the Fort Garry Campus of the University of Manitoba;

(b) It is associated with the post-World War II expansion of the University of Manitoba and its respected architecture department;

(c) It is an excellent example of the International Style and was designed by local Winnipeg firm Smith, Carter and Katelnikoff (Jim Donahue principal designer and Doug Gillmour assisting) with Grant Marshall the interior designer;

(d) The structure utilized a steel frame, originally clad in a unique system of extruded aluminum with precast concrete and glass – excellent examples for the time period;

(e) It is a conspicuous building within its campus setting; and

(f) The original curtain wall design and cladding has been completely replaced sensitive to the original design.

83 DAFOE ROAD – JOHN A. RUSSELL BUILDING (ARCHITECTURE)
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

The University of Manitoba was created on February 28, 1877, Western Canada's first university, but only to confer degrees on students graduating from its three founding colleges: St. Boniface College, incorporated in 1871; St. John's College, 1866; and Manitoba College, created in 1871.[1] Over the next three decades, other educational institutions affiliated with the University: the Manitoba Medical College in 1882; Wesley College, which became the University of Winnipeg in 1967, in 1888; and the Manitoba College of Pharmacy in 1902.

In 1900, the University moved to become a teaching university, building a three-storey science building on Broadway (Plate 1) and by 1904 had a Faculty of Science with six professors: A.H.R. Buller, botany and geology; Frank Allen, physics and mineralogy; M.A. Parker, chemistry; R.R. Cochrane, mathematics; Swale Vincent, physiology; and Gordon Bell, bacteriology. In 1909, chairs in English, History and Political Economy were created and a new building, the "Arts Building" was constructed immediately north of the Science Building (Plate 2).[2]

The University's enrolment and curriculum continued to grow, through World War I and after. The University's "downtown campus" reflected this growth, other buildings were utilized including the south wing of the old Court House Building (used for Arts, Law, Engineering and Administration), the former Parliament Building, Kennedy Street, used for Political Economy, Architecture and Philosophy, the Deaf and Dumb Institute, Portage Avenue between Sherbrook and Maryland Streets, Fort Osborne Barracks buildings (vacated when it moved to the old Tuxedo Agricultural College site) and even rented houses on Vaughan Street where "lectures were given in all the rooms from parlour to kitchen."[3] An "Emergency Building" was constructed in 1919-1920 (and later added to) to house the overflow.

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1 J. M. Bumsted, The University of Manitoba: An Illustrated History (Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press, 2001).

2 R.A. Johnson, "The Broadway Site of the University of Manitoba: Origins and Demise," in Manitoba History, Number 51 (February 2006), online version.

3 W. L. Morton, One University, A History of the University of Manitoba, 1877-1952, (Toronto, ON: McClelland and Stewart, 1957), p. 125, quoted in ibid.

In 1906, the Manitoba Agricultural College was officially opened, located on a large piece of property west of the city in what would become the Town of Tuxedo (Plate 3). The College, the first of its kind in Western Canada and one of only three in the country, offered full-time and short-term courses and enrolment grew quickly, prompting the Provincial Government to seek more land to enlarge the property (for more experimental crops) and to enable the College to offer a wider range of courses. When land near the College could not be obtained, a 243-hectare piece of property was purchased in what would become Fort Garry in 1910. Construction soon began on a number of red brick and stone buildings, including the Administration Building (1911-1913)- Plate 4, Horticulture and Biology Building (now Human Ecology) Building (1912), Tache Hall (1912) and Earth Sciences (now Fitzgerald) Building (1913).

By 1920, the University of Manitoba had grown to Canada's fifth largest, with the faculties of Arts, Science, Law, Medicine, Engineering, Architecture, Pharmacy and Agriculture, 1,654 male students, 359 female students and 184 academic staff, including 6 women.[4] In 1923, the Provincial Government of John Bracken organized the Murray Educational Commission to study the government's funding of education. The final report, tabled early in 1924, recommended the amalgamation of the two entities, the Agricultural College and the University, at the Fort Garry site.[5] The province moved quickly on the recommendations, introducing a bill to amalgamate the institutions as the University of Manitoba in February.[6] It was passed into law on March 3, 1924.[7]

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4 Canada Year Book 1921 (Ottawa, ON: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1922).

5 Manitoba Free Press, January 3, 1924, p. 7, January 17, 1924, p. 4 and January 26, 1924, p. 10. The Commission estimated an annual savings of $200,000 by amalgamating the two entities.

6 Manitoba Free Press, February 9, 1924, p. 3; and University of Manitoba website, http://umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/archives/uhistory/chrono1.html, 2013. The Act allowed the Agricultural College to retain its name but the "government, management and control of the college, together with property, revenue, business and affairs are vested in the board of governors of the University of Manitoba." In actual fact, the College became the Faculty of Agriculture and Home Economics.

7 Manitoba Free Press, March 4, 1924, p. 2.

But this was not the end of the Broadway site, which was not officially abandoned until the 1950s.[8] Over the next 20 years, the University continued to lead a "double life" with courses and students attending facilities at both campuses, including temporary classrooms or "huts" built in Fort Garry. In the early 1930s, however, the University of Manitoba sought to build more modern and spacious accommodations in Fort Garry. In 1932, the Tier Building (Arts) – Plate 5 and the Buller Building (Science) were completed, housing the Senior Divisions of the two faculties (the Junior Divisions remained on the Broadway campus).[9]

In 1959, the School of Architecture moved to create its own modern facility, located west of the Administration Building and the other original and 1930s-era structures and named after its Dean, John A. Russell (Plate 6).

STYLE

> The John A. Russell Building is one of the most influential works of modernist architecture in Winnipeg. The design was inspired by leading modern educational facilities: the Bauhaus buildings in Dessau by Walter Gropius and Crown Hall at the Illinois Institute of Technology by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.[10]

The John A. Russell Building features many of the design elements associated with the International Style. The style dates to the early 1930s, although its widespread popularity throughout Europe and North America did not occur until after 1950. Seen as a reaction to the historically based styles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it strove to reinterpret architecture using modern construction materials and technologies, especially steel framing and reinforced concrete. Architects could design buildings without the need for load-bearing exterior

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8 R.A. Johnson, op. cit. In October 1950, the Board of Governors of the University approved the vacating of the Broadway campus in favour of the Fort Garry site. The last remaining buildings on the Broadway site, the original Science Building and the Emergency Buildings, were demolished in 1962 to allow for the twinning of Memorial Boulevard from St. Mary Avenue to Broadway and the creation of Memorial Park.

9 Ibid.

10 "John A. Russell Building," Winnipeg Architecture Foundation website, http://www.winnipegarchitecture.ca/john-a-russell-building-university-of-manitoba/, 2017. Below as WAF website, Russell Building.

walls – the walls could be designed and built as mere "curtains" covering the steel/concrete structural system and could be constructed almost entirely of glass if desired. Through its use of hard, angular edges, severely plain surfaces, large areas of glass and square or rectangular modules, the style stressed material and proportionality over ornamentation.[11] The use of glass and steel gave the style a "lightness" of appearance.[12]

Winnipeg in the 1950s featured young, well-trained Modernist architects, a population and economic boom, ready capital and a lack of modern office and institutional space. Over the next two decades, some of the country's finest Modernist buildings were designed and completed in the city to meet the demand for space and the J.A. Russell Building would certainly be considered one of the best examples.

> The Modern era was…considered to encompass the years from about 1930 to about 1975; that is, from the period when a faith in a better future *independent* of the past began to take hold and find expression in a significant number of buildings, to the period when Canadians' faith in a better future untethered to the past began to fade, replaced by the *rooted* architecture of the heritage conservation and post-Modernist movements.[13]

CONSTRUCTION

This structure, built in 1958 and 1959, is a rectangular steel frame structure, originally clad in a unique system of extruded aluminum over wood cores. Precast concrete is used for piers and spandrels and the original glass was clear, gray (south side) and translucent backed with asbestos sheets (Plate 7). This original cladding was replaced in 2005 (Plate 8). The building project went over budget by approximately $120,000 according to one source, the University requested

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11 Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1991), pp. 34-35; and L. Maitland, et al., A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1992), p. 178.

12 J. Thorsteinson, Brutalist Architecture in Winnipeg (Winnipeg, MB: Winnipeg Architecture Foundation, 2012), p. 9.

13 National Historic Sites of Canada System Plan: Commemorating Canada's Built Heritage of the Modern Era (Ottawa, ON: Parks Canada, 2001), p. 4.

and received a grant of $500,000 from the Canada Council and a matching grant from the Province of Manitoba to cover the $1,000,000 final price.[14]

DESIGN

The two-storey structure is designed with two main façades, north and south, with open entrance platforms atop wide flights of stairs. The building's two entrances and open connecting space on the interior were intended to allow pedestrians to use the building as a "throughway" to shorten walking distances around campus.[15]

The exterior features many elements of the Modernist Style and the various elements are repeated on all four façades. The angular verticality of the style is expressed through regularly spaced projecting concrete piers. Within this space are the large windows, set in metal frames and further highlighted by fine metal dividers (Plate 9). The spandrels and remaining exterior is clad in precast concrete (Plates 10-12). The east and west walls are cantilevered 3.1 metres over a recessed base (Plate 13). The flat roofline is capped in metal.

Although the original curtain wall design and cladding has been completely replaced, its appearance has not significantly changed.

INTERIOR

The building features an interior courtyard surrounded by windows looking out from the library, administration offices and staff and student lounges (Plate 14). This space was rehabilitated by Hilderman Thomas Frank and Cram, 2007-2009.

The ground floor is accessed by two entrances, with an open foyer connecting them (Plate 15). The main floor holds the library, which extends into the basement, classrooms, lecture theatre, staff

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14 Western Construction and Building, Vol. 10, No. 8 (August 1958), p. 40.

15 WAF website, Russell Building. The sculpture on the north side was created by Cecil Richards and is called "Night and Day".

room and administration offices (Plates 16 and 17). Up a wide flight of stairs, the second floor has work space and the student lounge (Plates 18-20). The basement holds workshops, photo laboratory and studios for drawing, painting and sculpting (Plate 21).

INTEGRITY

The building stands on its original site and is in excellent structural condition. Major renovations to the interior, exterior and building envelop (architects were LM Architectural Group), were completed in 2004-2005, although the element of the original design have remained intact.[16] The inner courtyard, as mentioned previously, was rehabilitated between 2007 and 2009.

STREETSCAPE

The building is set back from the street, surrounded by wide walkways and green space.

ARCHITECT/CONTRACTORS

Architects for this important late 1950s project were the local Winnipeg firm Smith, Carter and Katelnikoff, with Arthur James "Jim" Donahue principal designer and Doug Gillmour assisting. Grant Marshall was the interior designer.[17] The firm formed in 1947 with Ernest John Smith, Dennis Carter and Walter Katelnikoff and was at the fore of the modernist movement in the City and Canada (see Appendix I for biographical information). This firm has been given 20 points by the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.

The Regina, Saskatchewan-born Donahue (1917-1996) studied architecture at the University of Minnesota and Harvard University, becoming the first Canadian to complete a degree at the latter's Graduate School of Design. He was hired as a professor of architectural design at the University of

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16 In 2008, LM Architectural Group was awarded a Heritage Winnipeg Preservation Award for the preservation of the building envelope.

17 Faye Hellner, "Étienne Gaboury. Manitoba Modernist," in Serena Keshavjeee (ed.), Winnipeg Modern: Architecture 1945-1975 (Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press, 2006), p. 230.

Manitoba in 1947 and "showed a keen aptitude and interest in furniture design."[18] Donahue partnered with Smith Carter Searle in 1959 in an unsuccessful submission for Winnipeg's new City Hall. He also partnered with the firm on its 1959 designs of the Monarch Life Building, 333 Broadway (Plate 22). Donahue left Winnipeg for Nova Scotia in 1963. He lived just outside of Halifax, NS until his death in 1996.[19]

PERSON/INSTITUTION

In 1913, the University of Manitoba created the School of Architecture, the second of its kind in Canada, within its Faculty of Arts and appointed Professor Arthur A. Stoughton (1867-1955) its head.[20] In 1920, the School joined the Faculty of Engineering, joined by the departments of civil, electrical and mechanical engineering.[21] The post-graduate architecture degree began in 1933 and in 1943, the School of Architecture and Fine Arts was established to include instruction for interior decorators.[22] In 1948, the School was reorganized in 1948 with a 5-year course replacing the 4-year degree and a new 4-year Interior Design degree replacing the existing 3-year diploma.[23]

The School moved into its fine new building in 1959 and four years later the Faculty of Architecture was created with John A. Russell its first Dean. Russell was born in Hinsdale, New Hampshire in October 1907, receiving his Master's Degree in Architecture from the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1928, he accepted a teaching position in the School of Architecture at the University of Manitoba, became its Director in 1946 and Dean in 1963.[24]

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18 "Donahue, Arthur James (Jim)," Winnipeg Architecture Foundation website, http://www.winnipegarchitecture.ca/ a-j-donahue/, 2017.

19 Loc. cit.

20 University of Manitoba Department of Architecture website, http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/architecture/about/history/43.htm, 2014. Below as Department of Architecture website.

21 W. L. Morton, op. cit., pp. 122 and 131.

22 Department of Architecture website.

23 W. L. Morton, op. cit., p. 183.

24 Winnipeg Free Press, December 29, 1966, p. 21; William P. Thompson, "Russell, John Alonzo," in Canadian Encyclopedia, online edition, 2013; Winnipeg Tribune, September 11, 1948.

Russell is credited with developing the excellence in the University of Manitoba's Architecture program during his tenure, recruiting some of the finest teachers available. Beyond the University, he gave his time and expertise to a wide range of organizations and groups, as a board member, jurist for numerous design competitions and as an advisor. His active role in the arts included set designs for the Winnipeg (now Royal) Winnipeg Ballet and the Little Theatre Group (predecessor to the Manitoba Theatre Centre). He was a director and president of the Winnipeg Art Gallery, Dean of the College of Fellows, Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, member of the American Institute of Architects, the Manitoba Society of Artists, the Association of Architectural Historians (United States and Great Britain) and an honorary life member in the Manitoba Association of Architects. He died in Winnipeg on December 28, 1966.[25]

EVENT

There is no known event connected with this building.

CONTEXT

This building was constructed in the post-World War II boom era when economic growth caused a rise in population and the expansion of many institutions, including universities. At the University of Manitoba, a need for modern teaching space, the evolution of the School of Architecture and the establishment of modern architectural firms in the city by graduates at the University's own School of Architecture all led to the construction of this influential building in the heart of the Fort Garry campus.

LANDMARK

The J.A. Russell Building is found in the heart of a large university complex filled with a wide variety of building of different ages, scales and exterior design.

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[25] Loc. cit.

APPENDIX I

Smith Carter Katelnikoff

Formed in 1947 by three recent University of Manitoba Architecture graduates, the firm, today operating as Smith Carter, was one of Winnipeg's most prolific and influential firms in the post-World War II era.

Ernest John Smith was born in Winnipeg and won the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Gold Medal at the University of Manitoba, moving on to receive his Master's Degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Joining with Dennis Carter and Walter Katelnikoff to create Smith Carter Katelnikoff, Smith also taught at the University of Manitoba while the practice was being established. Beyond this practice, Smith was also influential through his board work, including: President of the Manitoba Association of Architects (1956-1961); Chairman of the National Joint Committee on Construction Materials (1963-1965); and Dean of the College of Fellows (1972-1975) and Chancellor of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (1979). Smith remained as managing partner of the firm for 38 years, retiring in 1985. He died in 2004.[1]

Dennis Carter was born in Montreal, PQ in 1920 but spent his youth in England, before being sent to Canada during World War II. He graduated from the University of Manitoba with a Bachelor of Architecture in 1945 and was, like partner E.J. Smith, awarded the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Gold Medal. He died in 2012.[2]

Walter L. Katelnikoff was born in 1918, graduating with his Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Manitoba in 1944. He worked for a year in the offices of Moody and Moore and then, with Ernest J. Smith, worked for the firm of Northwood and Chivers. In 1947, Smith Carter Katelnikoff was formed and its commissions grew throughout the 1950s. In 1958,

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1 Winnipeg Free Press, October 25, 2004.

2 Winnipeg Free Press, June 30, 2012.

Katelnikoff left the firm and joined with associates John Stuart Allison and James P. Lewis to established Walter L. Katelnikoff and Associates. Katelnikoff died in 1974.[3]

The firm grew steadily in the 1950s on the strength of commissions for several large schools throughout the city and in rural Manitoba and Western Canada where large, modern centralized facilities were replacing the local one-room school.[4] As a result, the firm took on a fourth partner, E. Fitz Munn in 1954, although he only stayed with the firm for two years.[5] In the late 1950s, Jim Searle joined the firm, which became Smith Carter Searle Associates.[6] In 1969, the firm merged John B. Parkin Associates of Toronto to become Smith Carter Parkin.

In 2012, the firm, which had become Smith Carter Architects, was acquired by Genivar Inc.[7] and in 2014, merged with five other Canadian firms to create Architecture 49.[8]

Smith Carter, in all its various forms, is a world-renowned design firm. Among their more notable work are (all buildings Winnipeg unless otherwise noted):

École Varennes, 22 Varennes Avenue (1951)
Norwood Collegiate Institute (now Nelson McIntyre Collegiate), 188 St. Mary's Road (1955)
Rae and Jerry's Steak House, 1405 Portage Avenue (1957)
Monarch Life Building, 333 Broadway (1959-1963) – Massey Medal winner
J.A. Russell Building (University of Manitoba Faculty of Architecture), 83 Dafoe Road (1959) – Massey Medal winner
Knowles School for Boys, 2065 Henderson Highway (1960)
Medical Arts Building Parkade, 218 Edmonton Street (1961)
Canadian Wheat Board Building, 423 Main Street (1962)
Royal Bank Building, 220 Portage Avenue (1965)

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3 "Walter L. Katelnikoff," in Winnipeg Architectural Foundation website, http://www.winnipegarchitecture.ca/walter-katelnikoff/, 2013 (below as WAF website). Katelnikoff lived for many years at 762 South Drive, a street that was also home to architects Roy Sellors, Allan Waisman, Dennis Carter and John Russell.

4 Smith Carter website, 2014.

5 WAF website.

6 Smith Carter website, 2014.

7 Winnipeg Free Press, March 15, 2012, online edition.

8 Canadian Architect, May 26, 2014, online edition.

Smith Carter designs (continued):

Pan Am Pool, 25 Poseidon Bay (1967)
Entrance to Expo '67, Place d'Accueil, Montreal, PQ (1967)
Richardson Building, 1 Lombard Place (1967-1969)
Manitoba Centennial Centre, 555 Main Street (1967-1972)
Lombard Garage, 136 Lombard Avenue (1969)
Winnipeg Inn (Westin, Lombard Hotel, Fairmont Hotel) and Lombard Concourse, 175 Portage Avenue East (1970)
Canadian Chancery Building, Warsaw, Poland (1970)
Canadian Grain Commission Building, 303 Main Street (1970)
Bank of Canada Building, 161 Portage Avenue East (1971)
Woodsworth Building, 405 Broadway (1973)
Carlton Club, 280 Fort Street (1976)
Credit Union Central Plaza (IKON Building), 215 Garry Street (1976)
Great-West Life Assurance Company Building, 60 Osborne Street (1979)
Trisec Building, Scotia Bank Building & Winnipeg Square, Portage & Main (1980)
Great-West Life Assurance Company Building, 60 Broadway (1981-1983)
Air Canada Building, 355 Portage Avenue (1984)
Portage Place, 393 Portage Avenue (with Number Ten Architectural Group), 1986
St. Boniface Hospital Research Centre, 351 Avenue Taché (1986)
John Buhler Research Centre (Health Sciences Centre), 715 McDermot Avenue (ca.1990)
Kermanshah Technical Training Centre, Iran (date unknown)
Canadian Embassy Building, Moscow, Russia (date unknown)

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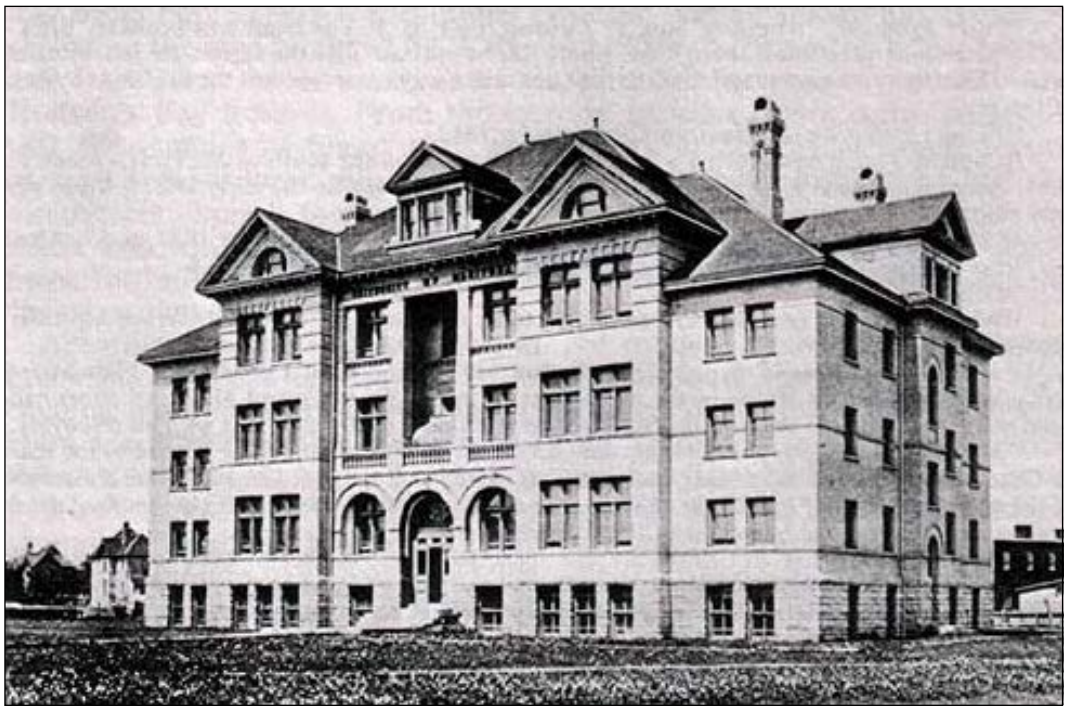


Plate 1 – University of Manitoba, Science Building (built 1900-1901), Broadway near the present-day Law Courts Building and Provincial Land Title Building, 1910. (Reproduced from Manitoba Pageant, Autumn 1977, Vol. 23, No. 1.)

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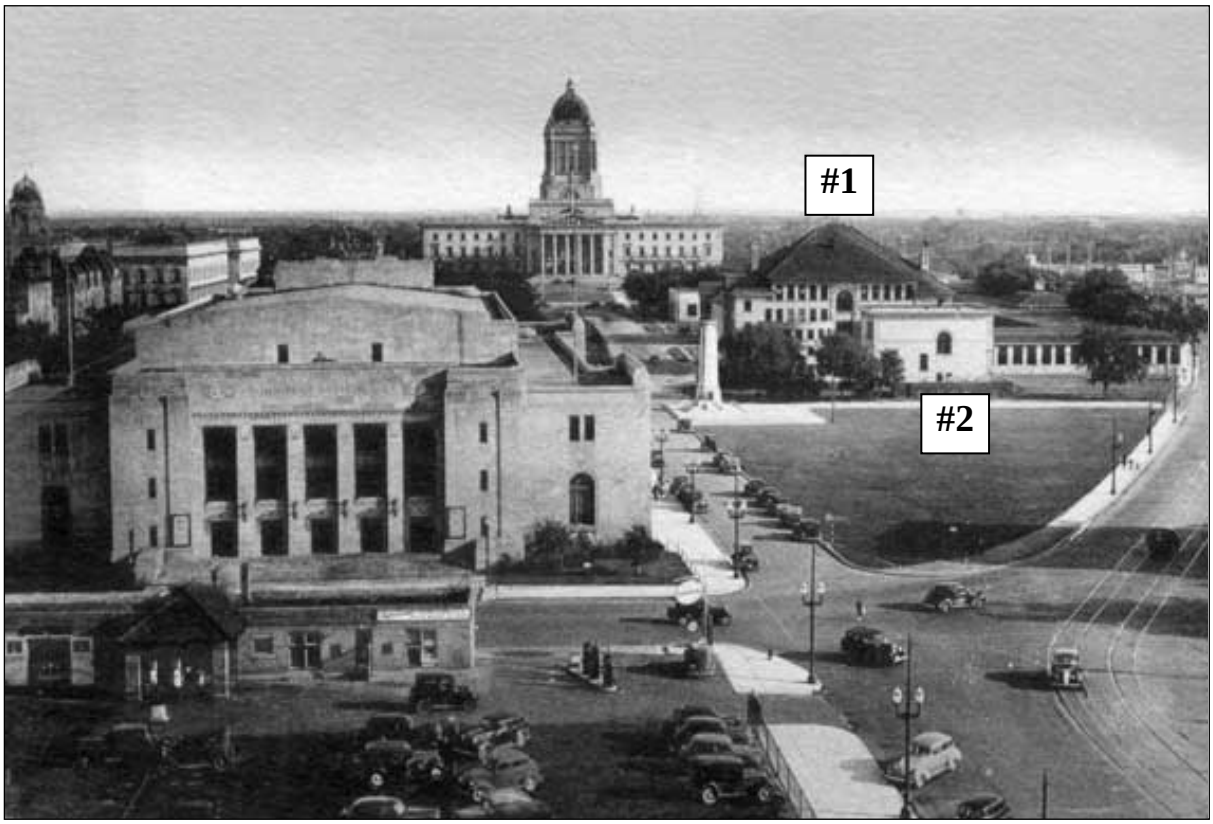


Plate 2 – Looking south from the Hudson's Bay Store, Portage Avenue, ca.1932. University of Manitoba buildings pictured are: #1- Science Building; and #2- Arts Building. (Reproduced from R.A. Johnson, "The Broadway Site of the University of Manitoba: Origins and Demise" in Manitoba History, Number 51, February 2006.)

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Plate 3 – Manitoba Agricultural College, Tuxedo Avenue, 1911. (Courtesy of the Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection #1327, Negative N2250.)

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Plate 4 – Unidentified men with Manitoba Agricultural College truck standing in front of Administration Building, ca.1935. (M. Peterson Collection.)

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Plate 5 – Tier Building, University of Manitoba Fort Garry Campus, 1935. (M. Peterson Collection.)

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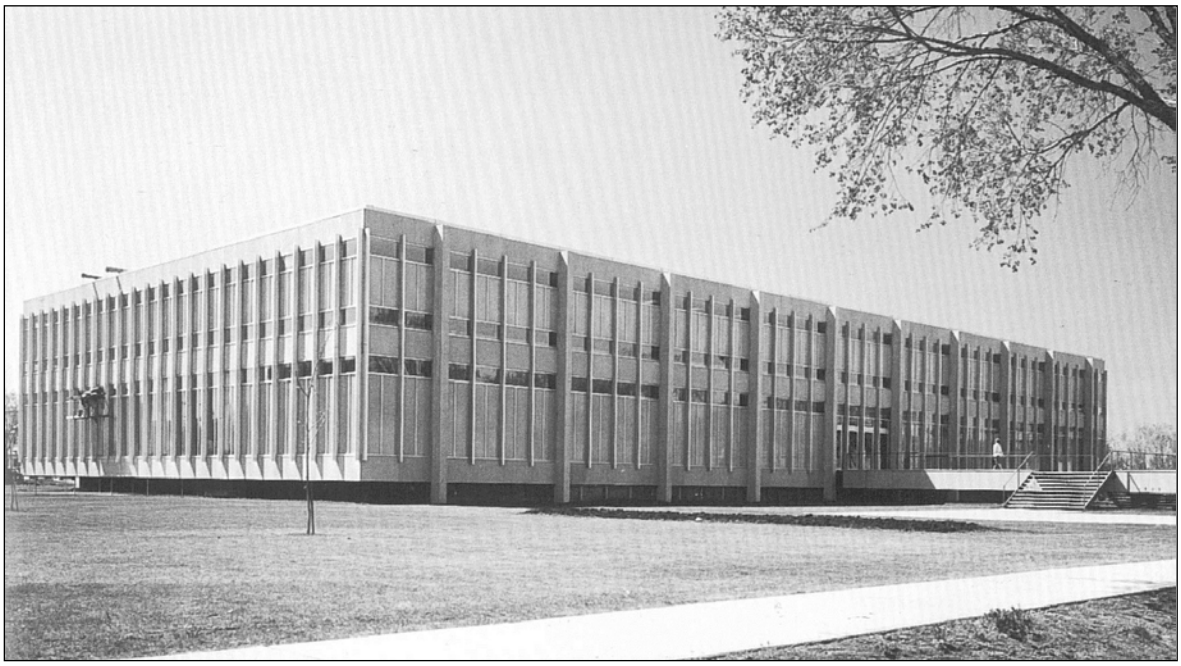


Plate 6 – Two views of the J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road. The top (north façade) is from 1957 and the bottom (north and east façades) is from 1962. (Top: Reproduced from Smith Carter website, http://www.smithcarter.com/our_history/1947__1960/; and bottom: H. Kalen Photograph, 249D5.2-31.)

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Plate 7 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, north façade, 1994. (M. Peterson, 1994.)



Plate 8 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, north façade during exterior renovations, 2005. (M. Peterson, 2005.)

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Plate 9 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, detail of north façade, 2018. (M. Peterson, 2018.)

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Plate 10 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, north and west façades, 2018. (M. Peterson, 2018.)



Plate 11 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, south façade, 2018. (M. Peterson, 2018.)

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Plate 12 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, façade, 2016. (Courtesy of the University of Manitoba.)

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Plate 13 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, cantilevered wall, west façade (southwest corner), 2018. (M. Peterson, 2018.)

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Plate 14 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, courtyard, 2016. (Courtesy of the University of Manitoba, 2016.)

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Plate 15 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, foyer, 2018. (M. Peterson, 2018.)

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Plate 16 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, main floor library (basement stairs to the right), 2017. (M. Peterson, 2017.)



Plate 17 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, main floor auditorium, 2017. (M. Peterson, 2017.)

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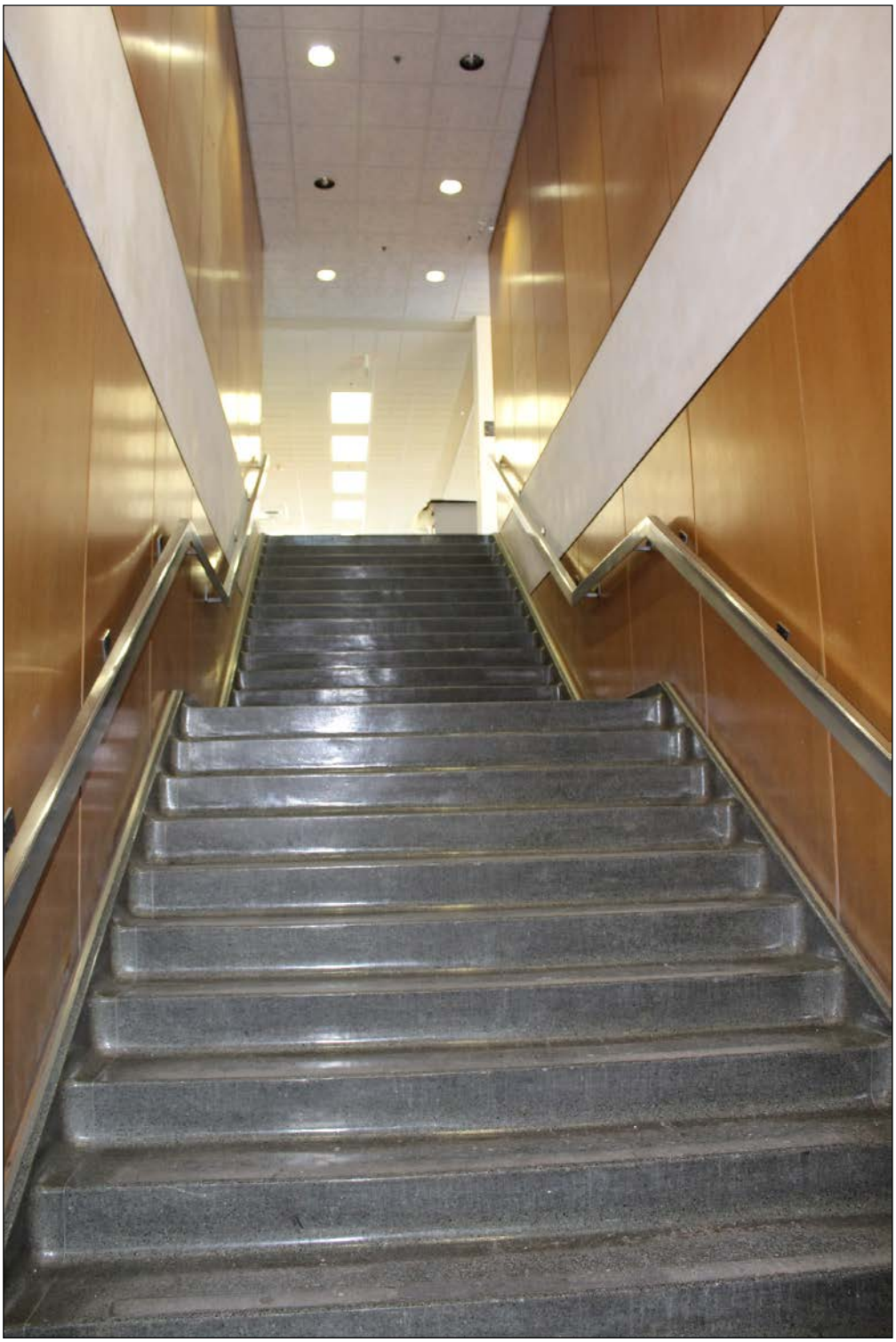


Plate 18 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, stairs to the second floor, 2017. (M. Peterson, 2017.)

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Plate 19 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, second floor, students' lounge, 2017. (M. Peterson, 2017.)

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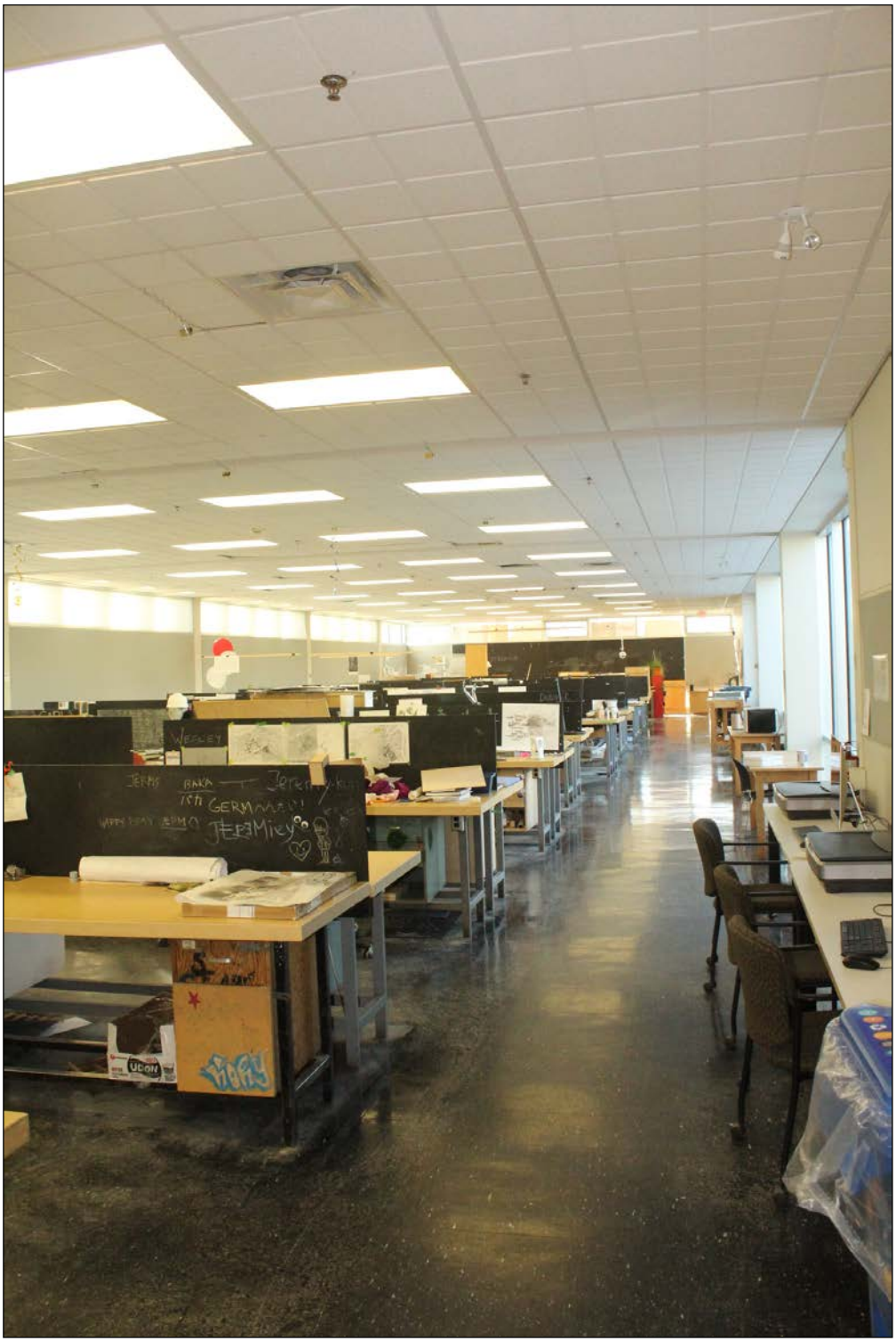


Plate 20 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, second floor, 2017. (M. Peterson, 2017.)

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Plate 21 – J.A. Russell Building, 83 Dafoe Road, basement, 2017. (M. Peterson, 2017.)

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Plate 22 – Monarch Life Building, 333 Broadway, 1961. (University of Manitoba Archives, Henry Kalen Collection.)